

- **MDAR Announces Open Application Period for Energy & Environmental Grants!**
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MDAR Announces Open Application Period for Energy & Environmental Grants!

Over the next couple of months, MDAR will be accepting applications from farmers who wish to participate in the Department's energy and environmental programs for Fiscal Year 2013. Interested agricultural operators are encouraged to review the applications on the webpages. **The deadline for both applications is April 30.**

Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (AEEP)

The purpose of AEEP is to support agricultural operations that are looking to install conservation practices that prevent direct impacts on water quality, ensure efficient use of water, as well as address impacts on air quality. By providing reimbursement directly to agricultural operations that implement eligible projects that prevent, reduce or eliminate environmental impacts, the program achieves its purpose and goals of minimizing environmental impacts from these operations for the benefit of the public.

AEEP is a competitive, re-imbursement grant program that funds materials and labor up to \$25,000 or 90% of project costs. Practices funded include those that prevent direct impacts on water quality, ensure efficient use of water, and address agricultural impacts on air quality. All projects where the primary focus is renewable energy or energy conservation would need to apply to the Massachusetts Ag-Energy Grant Program.

Reimbursement grants will be awarded on a competitive basis. Persons submitting successful proposals will be required to sign a contract with Agricultural Resources. All projects must be completed by June 30, 2013, subject to Department funding sources. Satisfactory receipts for costs of approved materials and labor must be submitted to Agricultural Resources.

AEEP grant applications are available at www.mass.gov/agr/programs/aEEP.

Ag-Energy Grant

The purpose of the MDAR's Ag-Energy Grant is to assist agricultural operations in an effort to improve energy efficiency and to facilitate adoption of alternative clean energy technologies in order that they can become more sustainable and the Commonwealth can maximize the environmental and economic benefits from these technologies. Reimbursement grants of up to \$25,000 will be awarded on a competitive basis. All projects must be completed by June 30, 2013.

Projects with a primary focus to improve air and water quality and to conserve water need to apply to AEEP.

Though all farm related energy efficiency and renewable energy projects that meet Ag-Energy Program requirements will be considered, higher priority project proposals should focus on either of two (2) specified categories and respective technologies listed:

Energy Efficiency:

- Dairy - Plate/Coolers, Heat Recovery and VSD Vacuum Pumps
- Greenhouse/Nurseries - Thermal blankets, roof venting modifications to eliminate mechanical ventilation needs, efficient heating distribution modifications – e.g. bench/soil in combination with staged control, electronic controls
- Higher Efficiency Advanced Low Emissions Indoor Furnaces or Boilers - Condensing type, central or unit heater utilizing conventional fuels, maple sap evaporator wood furnaces
- Other Technologies - High efficiency refrigeration, optimally with heat recovery, Reverse Osmosis equipment for maple sugaring operations, process heat recovery, energy efficient Technologies advancing urban food gardens

Renewable Energy: All Sectors

- Photovoltaics
- Wind
- Solar Thermal
- Geothermal
- Bio-fuel crops for those shown to be grown on marginal soils or used in crop rotation
- Bio-fuel Production provided demonstration of all federal, state and local process permits and approvals are identified and will be provided as part of the project installation, including but not limited to product pre- and post- storage, hazardous materials, and process effluents
- High Efficiency Advanced Gasification Biomass thermal boilers or furnaces intended for indoor use only, utilizing wood pellets, wood chips or kernel corn, meeting all current federal, state and/or local construction, emission and efficiency standards, and regulations and certified for MA installation
- Advanced biomass (gasification) Outdoor Wood Boilers (OWB), meeting all current federal, state and/or local construction, emission and efficiency standards, and regulations
Requirements that must be met include a demonstration that the OWB system shall:
 - a. meet all local Board of Health requirements
 - b. be installed and certified under MA Dept. of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) regulations 310 CMR 7.26 (50) through (54) found at www.mass.gov/dep/air/laws/regulati.htm#owb
 - c. comply with all certified equipment requirements; MassDEP certified OWB equipment is listed at: www.mass.gov/dep/air/community/certohh.htm
- Renewable Technologies advancing urban food gardens

Ag-Energy Grant applications are available at www.mass.gov/agr/programs/aegg.

Get Outdoors Massachusetts Mobile App Contest Submission Deadline March 30

[Get Outdoors Massachusetts Mobile Apps contest rules and information](#)

A reminder to smart phone app developers that March 30 is the deadline for the Get Outdoors mobile app contest!

The contest, hosted by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Departments' of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Fish and Game (DFG), will reward developers who create applications to help the public find outdoor recreation hot spots in Massachusetts by using smart phones to locate hiking trails, boat launches, pumpkin picking patches or fishing holes across the state.

The judging panel includes three outdoor recreation representatives, and three technology executives representing Microsoft, AT&T New England and Boston-based WHERE Inc., a mobile advertising service.

The Get Outdoors Massachusetts Mobile Apps Contest – the first of its kind for EEA – is open to the public and seeks participation from application developers to create mobile apps that feature Massachusetts outdoor and natural resources. The open data set includes geospatial data relating map public lands, state parks, farms, public water and land access points, rinks, pools, and other outdoor venues for outdoor recreation.

Registration is free. Entrants will compete for five prize packages – including a chance to join wildlife biologists on a black bear survey or win a year-long MBTA subway-bus LinkPass – and the opportunity to showcase their work publicly. EEA will feature the winning applications on its website and during a media event in April. The winning developers will have the opportunity to sell their winning apps after offering them free to the public for a year.

EEA's contest, launched last month, is held in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council.

Ninth Annual MA Blue Ribbon Calf Sale



The Massachusetts 4-H Dairy Program is pleased to announce the Ninth Annual MA Blue Ribbon Calf Sale to be held on March 24, 2012 at the Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds in West Springfield, MA. The sale offers 60 heifers from the seven major dairy breeds. Youth ages 8-18 years old receive a 5% discount off from the purchase of one heifer and bidding is open to adults too! Sale proceeds go to the MA 4-H Dairy Program.

Clinics begin at 10am and the sale starts at noon. A commercial display area will also be available at the sale.

Past sale cattle have gone on to become state and national show winners, leaders in production and excellent scored animals. This year, we have heifers selling out of multiple generations of EX scored dams, national show winners and high production cow families. Offspring sell from famous families such as, Atlee, Bliss, Elegance, Snickerdoodle, Snow and Veronica to name a few. For further information, contact Moira Poitras at mpoitras@charter.net or 413-244-8969.

Plan to join us on March 24 in West Springfield, MA! "Success in the show ring begins here!"
www.blueribboncalfsale.com



MDAR's mission is to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in Massachusetts. Through its four divisions – Agricultural Conservation & Technical Assistance, Agricultural Markets, Animal Health, and Crop and Pest Services – MDAR strives to support, regulate and enhance the rich diversity of the Commonwealth's agricultural community to promote economically and environmentally sound food safety and animal health measures, and fulfill agriculture's role in energy conservation and production. For more information, visit MDAR's website at mass.gov/agr, and/or follow at twitter.com/agcommishsoares. For our ongoing list of events and workshops visit and bookmark: www.mass.gov/agr/events/coming_up.htm.